

BARNETT VINEYARDS
Spring Mountain District
NAPA VALLEY

Merlot
Spring Mountain District
2017

Harvest Date:	September 16 th , October 4 th and 14 th 2017
Grape Source:	Spring Mountain District, Estate
Blend:	81% Merlot, 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 6% Cabernet Franc
Aging:	22 months in French Oak Barrels 65% new and 35% a range of 2-4 year old
Alcohol:	14.5%
Total Production:	31 Barrels
Release Date:	October 2019
Winemaker:	David Tate

Vintage Notes: Our Merlot struggles to grow up on the top of Spring Mountain in the solid rock. The small yields produce concentrated, complex wine. The 2017 vintage was a challenging one in the vineyard. The start of the season was exactly what we look for, sufficient winter rains that stop by Spring to allow for timely budbreak and flowering. It was a difficult summer, however, with record-breaking heat that stressed the vines out causing them to shut down for many days. Fortunately, the early part of fall cooled and we were able to bring in the fruit in a timely fashion.

Winemaker Notes: This Merlot comes from higher elevations on Spring Mountain. It is picked in the dark hours of the morning to ensure it arrives cool and undamaged. The Merlot spent an average of 17 days on its skins after which the wine spent 22 months in French cooperage, 65% new. This year the extraction of color and tannins were immediate. Different amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc were trialed, and for the first time a higher amount of Cabernet Sauvignon fit in. This added some serious structure and complexity.

Tasting Notes: The 2017 Spring Mountain Merlot is a serious complex wine. In previous years, the red bright fruit took the lead, where this year it falls more into the cassis black fruit with layers of spice. Gravel minerality and earth surround the dark fruit. The wine is stereotypically rich and lush as is expected from low yielding mountain Merlot. Blackcurrants and cooking chocolate dominate the palate. The tannins are much firmer than in previous years with well balanced mountain acidity. This big Merlot will age wonderfully over the next 14-15 years (2033-2034).